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PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE

Synthesis of the regional meetings or conferences convened as part of the substantive preparations for the Conference

Report of the Secretary-General of the Conference

SUMMARY

In recognition of the importance to the preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo, Egypt, in 1994, of the regional conferences that were convened as part of the preparations, the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/186, requested the Secretary-General of the Conference to submit to the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, at its third session, a report synthesizing the results of those conferences. The present report has been prepared in response to that request.

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CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION		1 - 3	3
I.	COMMON CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES	4 - 9	3
	A. Population growth and structure	10 - 13	4
	B. Population, the environment and sustainable development	14 - 18	5
	C. Health and family planning	19 - 28	6
	D. Women in development	29 - 34	8
	E. Urbanization, and internal and international migration	35 - 46	9
	F. Role of non-governmental organizations	47 - 48	11
	G. Data collection, analysis and research	49 - 54	12
	H. International cooperation and resource mobilization	55 - 59	13
II.	REGIONAL NEEDS AND PRIORITIES	60	14
	A. ECA region	61 - 66	14
	B. ECE region	67 - 75	15
	C. ECLAC region	76 - 82	17
	D. ESCWA region	83 - 87	18
	E. ESCAP region	88 - 93	19

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INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 1991/93 of 26 July 1991, the Economic and Social Council, in preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo in 1994, invited the United Nations regional commissions to convene meetings or conferences to review the experience gained in population policies and programmes in their regions and to propose future action. In recognition of the importance to the preparations for the Conference of those regional conferences, the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/186, requested the Secretary-General of the Conference to submit to the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, at its third session, a report synthesizing their results.

2. Five conferences were held. The Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), was hosted by the Government of Indonesia at Denpasar from 19 to 27 August 1992. 1/ The Third African Population Conference was hosted by the Government of Senegal at Dakar from 7 to 12 December 1992. The Conference was organized by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and UNFPA. 2/ The European Population Conference was held in Geneva, from 23 to 26 March 1993. It was organized by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), in cooperation with the Council of Europe and UNFPA. 3/ The Arab Population Conference was hosted by the Government of Jordan at Amman from 4 to 8 April 1993. The Conference was organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in cooperation with the League of Arab States and UNFPA. 4/ The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development was hosted by the Government of Mexico at Mexico City from 29 April to 4 May 1993. It was organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and co-sponsored by UNFPA. 5/

3. Three of the regional conferences adopted a declaration; one, a set of recommendations; and the other, a consensus statement. All were made available to the Preparatory Committee at its second session, in languages of submission only. There was a total of 348 recommendations.

I. COMMON CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES

4. The recommendations of the five regional conferences are both general and specific on the formulation and implementation of population and development policies and programmes. Those recommendations were addressed to Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Some of the more general concerns and priorities can be summarized as follows.

5. Human resources development should be the focus for policies and programmes for sustainable development. People are the most important and valuable resource that any nation possesses. The family should be regarded as the basic unit of society; Governments are, therefore, urged to incorporate family concerns into national development plans.

6. Population policies and programmes are considered an integral part of national development plans aimed at sustainable socio-economic development. Therefore, such policies and programmes should be fully formulated, implemented and integrated into all aspects of development planning and policy-making.

7. Policies and programmes aimed at sustainable development have been seriously hampered by the continuing prevalence of extreme poverty among vast groups in the developing world, particularly women and children, and the inequality between and within States. Unless countries are able to make substantial progress in alleviating poverty, development policies and programmes - including population-related policies and programmes - are likely to fail.

8. It is the basic right of couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children. In order to be able to exercise that right, individuals and couples must have free access to the necessary information and services. In addition, population policies and programmes should respect fundamental and universal human rights and treat people with dignity.

9. Notwithstanding the fact that major differences exist among the five regions and the countries within the regions with regard to demographic and development issues, the recommendations of the five regional conferences shared certain specific concerns, opinions and priorities.

A. Population growth and structure

1. Population growth

10. Success in fertility regulation was reported in many parts or regions of the world. However, in some countries the rate of population growth, still high, was regarded as a serious problem with significant implications for the achievement of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. For many countries experiencing rapid population growth, the momentum of population increase in relation to, for instance, the provision of health-care services, employment opportunities, education, housing facilities, sewage treatment and waste disposal, was considered burdensome. The regional conferences stressed the need for countries with high fertility rates to reduce fertility.

2. Population structure

11. Many developing countries had a population structure in which nearly half of the population was under the age of 15. This posed specific challenges for Governments in those countries. In the fields of education, health care and job creation, the demands were likely to outstrip existing availability. The regional conferences stressed the need to extend social services, both in terms of quantity and quality, during the coming decade in order to accommodate the impending massive demands.

12. In the developed, industrialized countries, ageing was regarded as a demographic feature that needed specific attention. The Governments of those countries were urged to formulate and implement policies and programmes that would address the special needs of the elderly so as to enable them to live a healthy and, whenever possible, productive life. The European Population Conference recommended action to enhance the self-reliance of the elderly and to give high priority to the development of human resources as a way of dealing with the adverse effects of population ageing - for instance, by developing training programmes for caregivers.

13. Some developing countries, notably in Asia and Latin America, were also experiencing a rapid increase in the numbers of elderly people, due to fertility declines in combination with increases in life expectancy at birth. As a result of changing family structure and size, caused by economic development and urbanization, some of those countries urgently needed to provide the necessary social services for their elderly people. Therefore, Governments were urged to develop strategies that took into account the changing age structure.

B. Population, the environment and sustainable development

1. Interrelationship between population variables, the environment and sustainable development

14. Building on the debates that took place during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and the adoption of Agenda 21, 6/ the regional conferences emphasized the interrelationships between population variables, natural resources and the environment, and sustainable development.

15. The regional conferences acknowledged the complexity of those relationships at the global, regional, national and local levels, and therefore urged that more research be undertaken on them. Conceptual frameworks and analytical tools needed to be developed further and the research findings used in policy decision-making.

16. Nevertheless, there was widespread consensus among the countries that participated in the regional conferences that population growth and distribution could reinforce and sometimes accelerate certain processes of environmental degradation. The recommendations stressed the need to bring population growth rates and spatial distribution into balance with natural resources and the environment without delay.

2. Inequality and poverty

17. The recommendations emphasized that the root cause of environmental degradation and population growth in the developing countries was the inequality between and within States. This inequality had, on the one hand, resulted in excessive patterns of human consumption and production in the industrialized countries and among the elites in the developing countries and, on the other hand, in the abject poverty of vast groups of people in the developing

countries. Poverty often left those people no other options than to exploit their natural resources, even beyond critical limits, out of sheer necessity. The regional conferences urged the Governments of the developed countries to encounter the problems of overconsumption and overproduction with great decisiveness. Sustainable development was likely to fail unless the issues of consumption, production and poverty were properly addressed.

3. Environmentally friendly technologies

18. The Governments of the developing countries were urged, wherever possible, to refrain from the introduction or use of technologies that were harmful to the environment. They should be assisted in the adoption of appropriate, environmentally friendly technologies and modes of production. Some of the conferences suggested the formulation and implementation of information programmes that would make people aware of the environmental consequences of certain patterns of consumption and production.

C. Health and family planning

1. Maternal and child health care

19. The health status of women and children, particularly in the developing countries, was a common concern. The regional conferences emphasized the need to reduce maternal, infant and child mortality rates in their countries rapidly. Two aspects deserved special attention. First, Governments were urged to improve the accessibility and utilization of maternal and child health-care (MCH) facilities, especially in rural areas and urban marginal communities. Secondly, the quality of MCH services, which was regarded as critical in increasing the utilization of the services, should be enhanced.

2. Family planning and reproductive health care

20. The recommendations in the area of reproductive health care emphasized the right of individuals and couples (the Arab Conference referred only to couples in this context) to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children. In order to be able to exercise that right, individuals and couples must have access to all the information and services needed. Therefore, Governments were requested to do their utmost to make contraceptive methods widely available and within reach of those wishing to make use of them, thereby satisfying the unmet need for family planning information and services among vast groups in both the developed and the developing countries. High priority should be given to the quality of care.

21. All five of the regional conferences stressed the need to integrate family planning services into an overall strategy that aimed at improving the health of women and children. Therefore, reproductive health-care services should be improved and/or extended. Reproductive health care referred to a strategy that incorporated, inter alia, services for prenatal care, obstetrics, post-natal care, counselling on family planning and contraceptive use, and maternal and

child health care. The starting point of the strategy was the autonomy of women in all aspects of their lives. Because of the young age structure of many developing countries, an increase in the demand for maternal and child health and family planning (MCH/FP) services was expected.

22. The African, Arab and Latin American and the Caribbean Conferences stressed the need to explore ways of producing contraceptives within the region. The Governments were urged to strengthen national and regional biomedical research capacities.

23. The five regional conferences emphasized the need to give due attention within population policies and programmes to the study of infertility and childlessness. In particular, the sociocultural consequences of infertility and childlessness should be further explored.

3. Sexually transmitted diseases, human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome

24. The pandemic of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), the rapid increase in the number of people worldwide who were infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases was addressed by all the regional conferences. There was general concern about the AIDS pandemic and sexually transmitted diseases. Governments were urged to formulate and implement policies and programmes aimed at preventing the spread of HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases and educating people about the causes and consequences. Those programmes should pay special attention to high-risk groups, especially youth.

4. The role of men

25. All five of the regional conferences paid special attention to the role and responsibilities of men in the field of family planning and child-rearing. Governments were urged to design special information, education and communication programmes for men in order to make them aware of their responsibilities with respect to family planning, contraceptive use, child-rearing and responsible fatherhood. The Asian and Pacific Conference and the Latin American and Caribbean Conference recommended that their Governments increase male involvement in MCH/FP through the promotion of male contraceptives and information, education and communication methods.

5. Youth and adolescents

26. Four of the five regional conferences recommended that attention be paid to the specific needs and problems of youth and adolescents with regard to health, sexuality, contraceptive use, pregnancy and parenthood. Particularly with regard to teenage pregnancies and AIDS, Governments were urged to undertake education and information programmes that were specially designed for teenagers and adolescents and to broaden health and family planning services for those groups.

27. Three of the five regional conferences emphasized the need to pay special attention not only to the health and family planning needs of youth and adolescents but also to the problems associated with access to education, particularly for girls and women, and unemployment. The African Conference recommended the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive strategy on youth, comprising of MCH and family planning services; improvement of the status, role and participation of youth in society; and the provision of employment opportunities.

6. Abortion

28. An estimated 20-40 per cent of maternal deaths each year had been due to the practice of unsafe abortions. Nevertheless, the issue of abortion was sensitive. There was broad consensus that abortion should not be a contraceptive method. Unwanted pregnancies, particularly among teenagers, constituted a major public health problem. Those pregnancies often ended in abortion. The Latin American and the Caribbean Conference called for more research and study on that sensitive issue, with particular reference to the prevalence of abortion and its impact on the health of women and their families. The prevention of unwanted pregnancies should be given high priority.

D. Women in development

1. Improvement of the status and role of women

29. All five of the regional conferences emphasized that the status and role of women in society needed to be improved and that all barriers and discrimination that prevented women from participating at all levels of society should be removed. Governments were urged to give this topic high priority.

30. According to the recommendations of the regional conferences, women's concerns should be an integral part of all population and development policies and programmes and should be integrated at all stages of the policy-making process. Therefore, gender perspectives needed to be an essential part of the planning and implementation of national programmes.

2. Productive and reproductive rights of women

31. The recommendations stressed that the productive and reproductive rights of women should be fully recognized by Governments. Governments were urged to either abolish legal and other forms of discrimination against women or to pass legislation to enhance the status of women. The European Conference urged Governments to promote conditions that further stimulated political, economic and social equality between men and women.

3. Women and education

32. The low status of women in many countries was determined, inter alia, by the limited access of girls and women to formal and informal education. Governments were urged to remove the barriers that prevented women and girls from obtaining equal opportunities for education. Governments were requested to improve the accessibility of education for girls. The African Conference recommended the institutionalization and strengthening of programmes for reforming the educational system and vocational training so as to make it possible for women and girls to participate on an equal basis with men.

4. Women and the economy

33. Governments should be aware of the important role women play in the economy. Women contribute significantly to the income of households. In many parts of the world, female-headed households had already become a common phenomenon in society. Nevertheless, female labour was often not valued as such, or women were paid less than their male colleagues or were denied access to the formal labour market. The Latin American and Caribbean Conference urged Governments to facilitate the incorporation of women into the formal labour market and ensure their access to existing social security programmes.

5. Women and health

34. All the regional conferences recommended that special attention be paid to the issue of women and health. Women as well as men should have universal access to health programmes, including prenatal, obstetrical and post-natal care, and family planning information and services. Therefore, Governments were urged to further improve the accessibility and availability of health and family planning services. The Asian and Pacific Conference acknowledged that there was particular need for women-centred and women-managed facilities so as to ensure that women and their family planning and MCH needs were fully taken into consideration, and urged that reproductive health care be improved considerably.

B. Urbanization, and internal and international migration

1. Urbanization

35. The world was becoming urbanized. In the year 2000, half of the world's population would live in urban areas and agglomerations. Governments were aware that they should take measures to accommodate the massive influx of people from the countryside and the growth of the urban population itself. Urbanization as such was not viewed as problematic, but the rapidity with which the urban population was growing and the question of how to incorporate migrants into the urban economy were matters of concern to the participants of the regional conferences. The Asian and Pacific Conference called for the implementation of strategies that recognized that urbanization was inevitable and that rural and urban development policies should not be undertaken in isolation from each other.

36. Governments were urged to improve the management and administrative abilities of city councils to deal with the process. There was a general call to decentralize the decision-making process to regional and municipal bodies. Also, local communities should be involved in the planning and management of city policies.

37. Further, the environmental and health consequences of urbanization were of general concern. Industrial pollution, vehicular emissions, industrial and household waste were or would become major problems in most urban centres in the world. They should be taken into account in national and urban development plans. The regional conferences recommended that the complexity of urban management necessitated greater cooperation at the various administrative levels.

2. Internal migration

38. The Arab Conference and the African Conference recommended that rural-urban migration be curbed by implementing integrated rural development programmes. The Latin American and Caribbean Conference, considering the depressing situation of many rural areas, recommended that Governments promote rural development strategies in both economic and social terms.

39. All the regional conferences recommended that Governments involve the private sector in the urbanization process by creating a favourable climate for that sector to invest in smaller towns and cities, in order to divert migration away from mega-cities.

40. The Arab Conference urged Governments to promote reliable data on internal population movements in order to be able to formulate adequate strategies on rural-urban migration. In addition, the Asian and Pacific Conference recommended that more detailed studies be undertaken to assess the economic impact of rural-urban migration.

3. International migration

41. International migration was high on the agenda of the five regional conferences. It was considered a world-wide phenomenon which needed special attention. All regional conferences stressed the need for international cooperation and agreements on the issue. Uncontrolled international migration flows were considered undesirable. Governments of sending and receiving countries should cooperate in redressing the root causes of international migration, such as poverty and inequality, unemployment, war and environmental degradation. Governments were requested to establish international agreements on migration policies. The recommendations of the regional conferences emphasized the need for international cooperation in the standardization of entry procedures. The Latin American and Caribbean Conference also recommended international agreements to prevent the brain-drain of highly qualified and skilled persons.

42. All regional conferences called upon Governments to do their utmost to respect and ensure the human rights of migrants and to assist them with integration in the countries of destination.

43. International migration was considered a normal feature of human behaviour and therefore not negative as such. The African Conference recognized the importance of migratory flows within Africa and between Africa and other continents. The European Conference emphasized that Governments of countries of destination had the right to control access to their territories and to adopt policies that shaped immigration flows.

44. The dissemination of information on international migration was highly recommended by most of the regional conferences. There was a generally felt need for thorough understanding of the causes of international migration and its effects on the economic and social situation in both the countries of origin and of destination.

4. Refugees and asylum-seekers

45. All Governments were called upon to take appropriate measures to protect the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers and to adopt fair, reliable and efficient procedures. In addition, the regional conferences urged Governments to provide adequate services for refugees and other displaced persons.

46. To eliminate the root causes of the refugee situation, Governments were urged to do their utmost to promote socio-economic development, avoidance of international and internal conflicts, good governance, democratization, respect for human rights, and environmental protection. Countries facing massive influxes of refugees should be supported so that they could provide refugees and asylum-seekers with the necessary services.

F. Role of non-governmental organizations

1. Involvement of non-governmental organizations

47. There was broad international consensus on the pioneering and significant contributions that non-governmental organizations and other segments of the private sector could make with regard to the formulation and implementation of population and development policies and programmes. Therefore, the five regional conferences urged Governments to involve non-governmental organizations, wherever possible and appropriate, as partners in the planning and implementation of their population, health and development programmes.

2. Strengthening of non-governmental organizations

48. Governments should support and, where necessary, strengthen non-governmental organizations in order to supplement government programmes in such fields as health care, family planning, poverty alleviation and environmental conservation.

G. Data collection, analysis and research

1. Data collection and analysis

49. All the regional conferences emphasized the need for continued improvement in the collection and standardization of population and demographic data. They expressed the necessity of improving efficiency in the processing and analysis of data and the development of uniform standards of database development.

50. All the regional conferences recommended that special attention be given to the training of specialists in the fields of demographic data collection, processing and analysis. Governments were urged to strengthen national and regional institutes responsible for data collection and analysis in order to facilitate policy formulation and implementation.

51. All the regional conferences stressed the need for international cooperation with regard to data collection and analysis and the dissemination and exchange of relevant population and development information. Countries were encouraged to cooperate by sharing experiences and technical expertise in the regions.

2. Research and training

52. Major attention in all the recommendations was given to the need for and importance of scientific research on population and its related issues. It was stressed that the research should be of an applied nature so as to facilitate policy formulation and implementation. On the other hand, knowledge of demographic trends and other related subjects should be given due consideration by policy makers.

53. All the regional conferences recommended that research in the following fields should be intensified: demography; fertility and human reproduction; the interrelationship between population, natural resources, the environment, poverty and sustainable development; internal and international migration; the role and status of women and their reproductive health needs; the factors that either inhibit or advance the integration of family planning services into existing services in the field of maternal and child health care; and effective integration of the aged and elderly into the mainstream of the social and economic development.

54. In order to improve and strengthen population-related research in the countries and regions, due attention should be given to the training of research specialists. Governments and the international community were requested to encourage technical and scientific cooperation in population and development research.

H. International cooperation and resource mobilization

1. International cooperation

55. All the regional conferences adopted recommendations that stressed the need for and the importance of international cooperation in the field of population and development. Cooperation between the regions and between countries within the regions was also emphasized. The European Conference recommended that special attention be given to the African region, where population-related problems were particularly serious.

56. There was broad international consensus that population assistance should be permanently based on respect for fundamental human rights and the responsible exercise of such rights by all individuals.

57. Again, the role and importance of non-governmental organizations in the field of international cooperation was emphasized in the regional conferences. Governments should involve non-governmental organizations in the planning and implementation of international cooperation programmes in the field of population and development.

2. Resource mobilization

58. In order to be able to implement all the recommendations adopted by the five regional conferences, Governments and the international donor community were urgently requested to increase, both financially and technically, their assistance in the field of population on a permanent basis. Reference was made to the Amsterdam Declaration on Better Life for Future Generations, 7/ in which Governments and donors were urged to increase their assistance in the field of population to a total of US$ 9 billion by the year 2000. The reports of the Asian and Pacific Conference and the African Conference urged Governments and donors to allocate at least 4 per cent of official development assistance to population activities, as requested in the Amsterdam Declaration.

3. Political commitment

59. The recommendations of the five regional conferences stressed that, in order to achieve sustainable development and a population growth that would be in balance with the natural resource base, political commitment, both in terms of policy-making and financial support, was essential. Without such commitment one should not expect any progress in reducing population growth rates in countries with high fertility rates or the achievement of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Therefore, Governments were urged to address population and development issues with great seriousness and to do their utmost to tackle the problems related to those issues.

II. REGIONAL NEEDS AND PRIORITIES 8/

60. Although there was much consensus among the five regions with respect to various topics within the fields of population and development, every region and all the countries within the regions had their own particular goals, needs and priorities. The following paragraphs highlight some of the specific regional concerns.

A. ECA region

61. Africa was facing a wide range of population and development-related problems. Population growth rates were high, as were maternal, infant and child mortality rates. The debt crisis, in combination with structural adjustment programmes and the overall economic situation, had resulted in insufficient resources for the efficient and effective implementation of national population programmes. However, it should be noted that every individual country had its own problems, needs and priorities.

62. The African countries agreed to strive to reduce the overall annual population growth rate from 3.0 to 2.5 per cent by the year 2000 and to 2.0 per cent by the year 2010. In order to reach those goals, the contraceptive prevalence rate should increase from 10 to 20 per cent by the year 2000 and to 40 per cent by the year 2010.

63. Life expectancy at birth had increased from 49 years in 1984 to 51 years in 1992. By the year 2000, life expectancy at birth should have increased to at least 55 years. In addition, infant mortality should be reduced to 50 per 1,000 births and child mortality to 70 per 1,000 or less. Programmes must be implemented that aim at reducing the maternal mortality by at least 50 per cent from the 1990 level by the year 2000. Such programmes should include services and studies that aim at reducing the increasing problem of unsafe abortions, estimated to cause 30-50 per cent of maternal mortality in parts of Africa.

1. Refugees

64. Refugees constituted a specific problem for African countries. Governments were requested to tackle the acute problems of refugees and displaced persons by setting up an integrated plan capable of dealing with the root causes and offering solutions for the immediate, medium and long terms. Measures should be undertaken to protect the rights of refugees. Governments should give priority in policy-making to elimination of the underlying causes of the refugee situation through negotiation, conflict resolution, democratization and respect for human rights. In addition, Governments should ensure that adequate services were being provided for refugees and displaced persons.

2. International cooperation

65. The international donor community was requested to continue and further increase its support to African countries in the fields of population and development and to consider the conversion of African debts into grants. In addition, UNFPA was requested to consider Africa as a priority region. African Governments should ensure that adequate planning and budget allocations were devoted to national population and socio-economic development programmes.

66. In addition, the Third African Population Conference recommended the strengthening of South/South cooperation in training, exchange of information, sharing of experiences, know-how and technical expertise.

B. ECE region

67. The countries of Europe and North America were experiencing a sustained period of low, and at times unprecedentedly low, levels of fertility. Fertility continued to be well below the level of replacement. Even though in a few countries slight increases had been observed recently, the general expectation was that substantial increases in fertility were unlikely to occur. Many countries were still evaluating the socio-economic implications of long-term population decline and the phenomenon of ageing of the population. In addition, an ever-increasing number of women were trying to achieve personal fulfilment both in their family and professional lives. A great challenge for societies was to create conditions that enabled men and women to combine parental and work roles in a responsible manner.

68. Although the use of contraceptive methods had been widely practised in the region, there were still individuals and couples who did not have access to or make insufficient use of appropriate methods of fertility regulation. High rates of unintended pregnancies and abortion attested to the problem, notably in Eastern Europe.

69. Improvements in health promotion, disease prevention and treatment had affected morbidity and mortality levels and trends in most Western countries, and further gains were expected. At the same time, new problems had arisen, such as the AIDS pandemic, drug abuse and the influence of environmental degradation on health and mortality. Disparities between Western and Eastern Europe in various demographic indicators, such as maternal and infant mortality and life expectancy, suggested the need for improved health care, including reproductive health services, in Eastern Europe.

1. Ageing

70. The continued low levels of fertility and declining mortality at higher ages had a direct impact on population growth and the age structure of the countries in Europe and North America. Those trends had important socio-economic and political implications. In many countries "ageing policies" were already being developed in order to be able to adjust to changes in the composition and size of the labour force. Governments were urged to further

develop such policies since the already high expenditures on health and retirement benefits were likely to increase with the ageing of populations.

71. Policy makers were urged to give due consideration to past and current demographic trends and knowledge. The European Population Conference gave high priority to the development of human resources as a way of dealing with the effects of an ageing population. The Governments of the region were also urged to develop measures to enhance the self-reliance of the elderly and to facilitate their continued participation in society.

2. International migration

72. International migration was high on the political agenda of the countries in the region. Most countries in the region had been experiencing a considerable net influx of temporary or permanent migrants. The most crucial questions to be faced were how to control and manage the migratory flows to and within Europe in a humane and effective way, and how to achieve a desirable level of integration. It was felt that there was a clear need for increased cooperation within Europe in the field of international migration. According to the European Population Conference, the Governments of countries of destination had the right to control access to their territories. Immigration was not regarded as a solution for adjusting the age structure of the societies.

73. The Conference recommended that Governments of origin and of destination should, in order to alleviate the massive and uncontrolled international migration flows, seek to redress the causes of emigration by increasing efforts to achieve sustained economic and social development, avoid international and internal conflicts, respect the rule of law, promote good governance, strengthen democracy, promote human rights, support education, nutrition, health and population-relevant programmes, and ensure effective environmental protection. Those efforts might require financial assistance, the reassessment of commercial and tariff relations and full access to world markets, and stepped-up efforts on the part of the developing countries to create the framework for a market-oriented economy and liberal trading system.

3. Countries in transition

74. The health, population and development problems of Eastern European countries, the so-called "countries in transition", were given much attention by the European Population Conference. The revival of old national and ethnic rivalries not only facilitated the outbreak of armed conflicts and serious political crises but also exacerbated demographic problems. Governments in the region were requested, as a matter of urgency, to assist the countries in transition in the field of population issues. Key elements should be financial support, technical back-stopping, training and exchange of information, experience and expertise.

75. Governments and regional organizations should assist the countries in transition in the field of reproductive health care, including family planning. The countries in transition should also be assisted to implement reforms in

health systems and to develop policies and implement integrated programmes related to health population environment issues.

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C. ECLAC region

76. Despite the severe economic crises that the region had been facing and in some cases was still facing, real progress had been achieved with regard to demographic indicators. One of the most outstanding demographic changes in Latin America and the Caribbean in the past 25 years had been the pronounced decline in fertility, from 6.0 to 3.5 children per woman. The decline reduced the annual average population growth rate of the region to 2 per cent by the second half of the 1980s. The growth rate had been projected to fall to 1.7 per cent annually in the 1990s. At the same time, life expectancy at birth rose from 57 to 69 years, contributing to the ageing of the population within the countries, although the regional differences were diverse. Within the region, life expectancy at birth ranged from less than 60 years to nearly 75. Those differences also meant that there were countries in the region where the population had been growing at an annual rate of 3 per cent and others where the rate had been less than 1 per cent.

77. Another remarkable demographic feature of the region had been the rapid process of urbanization. Currently, some 71 per cent of the population lived in urban areas, largely as a result of heavy internal migratory flows. Latin America, with less than 10 per cent of the world population, had four of its 10 most populous cities. The situation was not identical in all countries of the region, since some countries still had rural populations that accounted for more than 60 per cent of the total population.

1. Regional plan of action

78. Considering the importance of the consensus reached during the Conference on various topics in the population and development field, the member States decided to promote the adoption of a regional plan of action, based on the Latin American and the Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development, adopted at the Conference. The plan of action would include the regional and country specific goals and needs of the region. The ECLAC secretariat was requested to draw up a draft plan, in collaboration with UNFPA. The draft plan would be presented at the twenty-first session of ECLAC, to be held in Colombia, and submitted as a contribution to the preparatory process for the International Conference on Population and Development.

2. Teenage pregnancies and abortion

79. Taking into account the high prevalence of teenage pregnancies in the region, most of which were unplanned, Governments were requested to design and adopt global reproductive health-care models for teenagers, with special emphasis on family life education, comprehensive sex education and family planning. Governments were also urged to reconsider regulations restricting teenagers' access to birth control methods.

80. Abortion was considered by the Latin American and Caribbean Consensus as a major public health issue in the region which should be treated with great sensitivity. It could never be regarded as a method of regulating fertility. Nevertheless, it was recommended that Governments devote greater attention to the study and follow-up of the issue, particularly with regard to the impact of abortion on the health of women and their families.

3. Sterilization

81. Given the high prevalence of tubal ligation in some countries of the region, and taking into account the irreversibility of that contraceptive method, Governments were encouraged to strengthen the advisory services that informed potential users of sterilization about the existence of alternative contraceptive methods and the consequences of choosing a permanent method.

4. Indigenous people

82. The Latin American and Caribbean Consensus took into account the fact that various indigenous people lived in the region who survived in often precarious, marginal living conditions and still ran the risk of extinction. Therefore, Governments were urged to adopt, in the short term, population policies and programmes that considered the need to safeguard and protect the specific cultural traits of indigenous peoples while at the same time recognizing and respecting their space, land, language and systems of values and beliefs.

D. ESCWA region

83. From a demographic point of view, the ESCWA region had undergone tremendous change. The most remarkable change was its growth in population, which increased from 132 million in 1974 to about 237 million in 1992. It is expected to grow to 449 million by the year 2020. Governments were urged to achieve appropriate population growth rates through the provision of services needed to attain national policy goals. In addition, Governments should strive to minimize mortality rates, especially female mortality due to pregnancy-related complications.

1. Migration, migrants and refugees

84. Governments were urged to promote more inter-Arab coordination of population policies, with particular reference to migration and the movement of labour. The Amman Declaration, adopted at the Arab Population Conference, recommended the development and implementation of a world migration survey. Also, countries should promote policies and programmes aimed at reaching a geographical distribution of the population in step with the requirements of sustainable development and a healthy environment. Governments were requested to rationalize urban growth and improve the quality of life in rural areas through the promotion of integrated rural development programmes with economic,

social and environmental dimensions. In such ways they would achieve population stability in those areas and curb rural-urban migration.

85. According to the Amman Declaration, all possible ways and means should be adopted to protect the rights of migrants, refugees and persons forced to move by upheavals and wars, especially women and children. Receiving countries, especially the least developed among them, should be given international support in accommodating those groups until they return to their home countries.

86. The specific health and population problems and needs of the Palestinian people were given attention in the Amman Declaration. It recommended action to relieve the sufferings of Palestinian families by raising the standards of public health, maternal and child health care and family protection programmes.

2. International cooperation

87. In order to improve understanding of Arab population issues and promote regional cooperation in the field of population, ESCWA and the League of Arab States were called upon to increase and expand the scope of their contributions. Emphasis was placed on the role of Arab funds in financing country and regional projects and research relating to population activities.

E. ESCAP region

88. The population of the countries and areas in Asia and the Pacific region was expected to increase from 3.2 billion in mid 1992 to 4.1 billion in the year 2010. The current annual population growth rate was estimated at 1.7 per cent, although there were major regional differences. The bulk of the population increase during the coming decades was expected to occur in South Asia, where the annual population growth rate was not expected to fall much below 2 per cent.

89. The average total fertility rate was estimated at 3.1 children per woman, with regional variations. The lowest fertility was measured in East Asia at 2.1 children per woman; the highest had been in South Asia at 4.3 children. A similar disparity existed with respect to infant mortality. In South Asia infant mortality was estimated at 90 per 1,000 births, which was more than three times the rate in East Asia, where it was 26 per 1,000 births.

90. The Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference urged Governments to further reduce population growth rates by adopting strategies aimed at attaining replacement level of 2.1 children per woman by the year 2010 or sooner. In addition, countries should strive to reduce infant mortality to 40 per 1,000 births or lower during the same period, and maternal mortality should be reduced to at least half the 1990 level by the year 2010.

1. Migration

91. The growing demand for overseas workers in countries and areas of the ESCAP region in which the demographic transition had been completed would become of increasing policy importance. In addition, the gender selectivity of the migrants had been changing gradually, because more and more women were migrating independently. Governments were urged to take measures to protect the rights of migrants, particularly of women and children. Further, policies should be implemented to assist persons displaced by environmental calamities.

2. Ageing

92. With significant and rapid fertility declines and improvements in mortality, population ageing would assume greater importance in the region in the near future. With rapid industrialization, urbanization and the increasing frequency of both spouses engaging in full-time paid work, traditional family support systems for the elderly would be placed under considerable strain, according to the Conference. Therefore, Governments were urged to formulate long-term development strategies that took into account the changing age structure. Strengthening of the family support system was also recommended, as was specific research on the effective integration of aged people into the mainstream of development.

3. International cooperation

93. The need to mobilize additional resources was currently greater than ever, according to the Conference. Therefore, the international donor community was requested to increase the international budget for programme support and financial assistance to the ESCAP region. Further, technical cooperation among developing countries should be encouraged.

Notes

1/ "Report of the Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, Denpasar, Indonesia, 19-27 August 1992" (E/CONF.84/PC/14).

2/ "Report of the Third African Population Conference, Dakar, Senegal, 7-12 December 1992" (E/CONF.84/PC/13).

3/ "Report of the European Population Conference, Geneva, 23-26 March" (E/CONF.84/PC/15).

4/ "Second Amman Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World, adopted at the Arab Population Conference, Amman, Jordan, 4-8 April 1993" (E/CONF.84/PC/16).

5/ "Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development, adopted at the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, Mexico City, 29 April-4 May 1993" (E/CONF.84/PC/17).

6/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I.

7/ See A/C.2/44/6, annex.

8/ The population estimates given in this chapter were those used in the official Conference documents. They may differ from the demographic estimates and projections prepared by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations.

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE

Synthesis of the subregional meetings and conferences convened as part of the substantive preparations for the Conference

Report of the Secretary-General of the Conference

Addendum

SUMMARY

In recognition of the importance to the preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in 1994, of the regional and subregional population conferences that were convened as part of the preparations, the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/186, requested the Secretary-General of the Conference to submit to the Preparatory Committee, at its third session, a report synthesizing the results of those conferences. The present report, summarizing the main results of the five subregional conferences that were convened, has been prepared in response to that resolution.

* A/CONF.171/PC/1.

INTRODUCTION

1. As a follow-up to the five regional population conferences that were convened as part of the substantive preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, which will take place in 1994, the following five subregional population conferences and meetings have been held:

(a) The Maghreb Conference on Population and Development, Tunis, 7-10 July 1993 (see A/C.2/48/7);

(b) The South Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Population and Sustainable Development, Port Vila, 9-10 September 1993 (see A/C.2/48/3);

(c) The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Ministerial Conference on Women and Family Health, Kathmandu, 21-23 November 1993;

(d) The Andean Meeting on Population and Development, Lima, 1-3 December 1993;

(e) The Caribbean Meeting of Experts for a Regional Plan of Action on Population and Sustainable Development, Port-of-Spain, 2-3 December 1993.

2. The present report summarizes the main results of the above-mentioned subregional meetings and conferences. Three of the five conferences or meetings adopted a declaration, one a plan of action and the other a resolution on women and family health. The declarations and the plan of action were based on the outline of the draft of the final document of the Conference.

I. MAGHREB CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

3. The Maghreb Conference on Population and Development was held at Tunis from 7 to 10 July 1993. The Maghreb countries (Algeria, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) endorsed the Declarations adopted at the Third African Population Conference held at Dakar, from 7 to 12 December 1992 and at the Arab Population Conference held at Amman, from 4 to 8 April 1993.

4. Despite the progress made in addressing population issues in the Maghreb countries, the policies and programmes that have been drawn up, and the institutional measures taken, birth rates, maternal and infant mortality rates and the incidence of diseases remained generally high and varied widely from one country to another. The representatives of the Maghreb countries were of the opinion that the achievements made in family planning should be consolidated and that a new and well-directed impetus be imparted to them. The population of the Maghreb was currently approaching 70 million, and was expected to reach 82 million by the year 2000, 100 million by 2010 and 130 million by 2025. Current rates of population growth in the Maghreb countries (2.7 per cent per annum) were regarded as high in relation to the average population growth rate in the developing world of 1.6 per cent per annum.

5. The Conference adopted the Tunis Plan of Action on Population and Development in the Arab Maghreb, containing concrete actions and recommendations, as set out below.

A. Integration of population policies in the sustainable development process

6. The Plan of Action urged Governments to assign a major place to the population issue in the conceptualization of the sustainable development process. On the one hand, population policies must be adopted to improve the standards of living of the population and to ensure its welfare in terms of a better distribution of resources and greater access to education and health services, as well as in terms of employment, housing, culture and leisure. On the other hand, family-planning policies should not be restricted to limiting population growth, but should be integrated within an approach aimed at ensuring the stability and protection of the family.

B. An approach to population issues in the light of the interdependence and complementarity of the Maghreb countries

7. The countries of the Maghreb were encouraged to strengthen their cooperation in the field of population and development. They must formulate training programmes; initiate exchanges of experts; establish research programmes focusing on their common goals in the population field; launch joint information campaigns and programmes; promote the economic and social role of women; and encourage non-governmental organizations to participate in the formulation and implementation of population programmes.

C. International migration

8. The Plan of Action stated that the rights of migrant workers and their families must be protected in accordance with relevant international covenants and bilateral agreements, and that a Maghreb-European framework must be established to guarantee those rights. The Maghreb countries and the countries of the European Community were encouraged to establish specific strategies to assist migrants and, particularly, women in the fields of education, training and employment.

D. Population movements among the Maghreb countries

9. The Maghreb countries must simplify procedures for the travel and residence of nationals of the region for purposes of work and accord them the rights enjoyed by the citizens of each individual country in such matters as social security, retirement pensions and family allowances.

E. Internal migration and regional development

10. The Maghreb countries were encouraged to redouble their efforts in the coming decades, and to pursue a policy to combat poverty and urban overpopulation. In doing so, they must accord a proper place to urban policy and must encourage the creation of medium- and small-sized towns that can ensure improved economic and social conditions for their inhabitants. In rural areas, the agricultural sector should be further developed.

F. The status of women, women's rights and the role of women in development

11. The Plan of Action called upon Governments to promote the role of women in development and to grant them the right to exercise informed choice in the matter of family planning with unimpeded access to necessary means. This right must be exercised through the establishment of an adequate number of family-planning centres, providing easy access for women to contraceptives, and the formulation of an educational and cultural programme to encourage women and men to choose responsible reproductive behaviour so as to prevent child neglect, illegal and unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted diseases etc.

G. Elaboration of joint health programmes

12. The Plan of Action called upon Governments of the Maghreb countries to promote the inclusion of population factors in preventive and therapeutic health strategies and programmes; to bolster maternal and child health services and safe motherhood programmes; to ensure that married couples are better informed about family planning; and to promote and disseminate research on maternal and child health issues.

H. Political and cultural aspects of population issues

13. According to the Plan of Action, in the formulation of population policies, an endeavour must be made to establish a true understanding of religion as it relates to population issues in general and to the spacing of births in particular.

I. Towards sustained international assistance

14. The Plan of Action stated that any sustainable economic growth necessarily leads to a decline in population growth. Donor countries and institutions must, therefore, continue to cooperate with the Maghreb countries in the funding of population policies.

J. Increased efforts for the use of debt service for the benefit of development

15. The Maghreb countries proposed that debt service be used for the benefit of population policies and programmes.

K. Population and environment

16. The Plan of Action further stated that another portion of the debts should be allocated to the funding of environmental protection projects. In addition, any population policy must accord attention to the interaction of population, environment and development, and concern for environmental protection must be a factor in any model for economic and social development.

L. The role of non-governmental organizations

17. The Plan of Action called upon Governments of the Maghreb countries to undertake measures aimed at expanding the participation of local and regional organizations in the planning, implementation and funding of health and family-planning programmes in order to strengthen the relations between States and non-governmental organizations.

M. Increased scientific and technical cooperation in the population field

18. The know-how acquired in the population field should be made generally available and the significant stock of technical knowledge accumulated in the region over the past two decades should be put to use through the exchange of experience, joint experiments and the acquisition of technical and scientific knowledge. In addition, the Plan of Action welcomed the establishment of a training centre in the field of population and development. Also, an integrated system for population censuses, information relating to civil status and household surveys should be established, and an endeavour should be made to standardize research methodology in those fields.

19. The Tunis Plan of Action was made available to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session by the Government of Tunisia in document A/C.2/48/7.

II. SOUTH PACIFIC MINISTERIAL MEETING ON POPULATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

20. The South Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Population and Sustainable Development was held at Port Vila on 9 and 10 September 1993. The following countries and territories were represented at the Meeting: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Western Samoa. The purpose of the Meeting was to identify key population and development issues of concern to the

region and to formulate policy positions that the South Pacific countries could use in preparation for the 1994 Conference and in the Conference itself. The region was geographically, ecologically and socio-culturally diverse. But all the countries and territories shared a strong affinity with and dependence on land and ocean resources for their livelihood, resources that were coming under increasing pressure owing to continuing high population growth, expanding economic activity and natural disasters.

21. The Meeting took particular note of the objectives of the World Population Plan of Action, 1/ the Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development, 2/ the Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources Development in the ESCAP Region 3/ and Agenda 21. 4/ The Meeting adopted the Port Vila Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development, 5/ as a statement of commitment and as part of the regional contribution to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. Following a preamble and a statement of principles, the Declaration addressed, inter alia, the 14 major subjects and areas of concern set out below.

A. The interrelationship between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development

22. The Port Vila Declaration recognized that, at both the national and the regional levels, population issues should be integrated into the formulation and implementation of all policies and programmes related to economic and social development. In addition, it encouraged Governments to consider the establishment or identification of a ministry or other unit responsible for population and planning. The success of such efforts would depend on continued political commitment. The Port Vila Declaration supported the implementation of policies that would minimize severe ecological damage and its health and welfare repercussions. This required, inter alia, better knowledge of the relationship between population, culture and the environment; development of the institutional capacity to conduct the necessary research and policy analysis; inclusion of projected demographic trends and imputed consumption patterns in planning; and political commitment given to policies that would slow population growth, rationalize population distribution, alleviate poverty, reduce environmentally dangerous production and consumption, and foster the use of appropriate technologies.

B. Gender equality and the empowerment of women

23. The Declaration stated that population issues could not be separated from the issue of improving the social, economic, political and legal status of women. For sustainable development to occur, there must be genuine gender equality and equal access to and participation in all development activities, particularly education and training, employment and health care. The Declaration recommended that Governments assess the impact of macroeconomic policies, particularly the impact of structural adjustment policies on potentially vulnerable groups, among which women are overrepresented.

C. Population growth and structure

24. The Declaration reaffirmed the responsibility of Governments to ensure that children are able to grow and develop their full potential, as well as to be supportive to families and communities in their efforts to nurture and guide children. Governments and administrations were urged to protect children's well-being by continued adequate support for essential health and educational services for children, particularly primary health care and education.

D. The family, its role and composition

25. The Declaration acknowledged that the family sits at the nexus of tradition and modernity and makes a vital contribution to socio-economic development and to personal well-being. Therefore, family planning should be considered a means of improving the quality of family life, and not an end in itself. Population policies and programmes should give publicity to the role of family planning in enhancing the quality of family life.

E. Reproductive rights, reproductive health and family planning

26. According to the Declaration, maternal and child health/family planning (MCH/FP) programmes should address the following needs: to reduce the high levels of maternal and infant mortality; to improve the information on and access to contraceptive methods; to improve adolescent health; and to increase the accessibility and availability of safe, affordable, culturally and socially acceptable MCH/FP services. The Declaration encouraged Governments and administrations to adopt criteria for unmet needs for family-planning services that were based on health risks and the principles of safe motherhood initiatives.

27. The Declaration stressed that, for the success of family-planning programmes, the following considerations, inter alia, were essential: increased male involvement; partnership between Governments and non-governmental organizations; community involvement; integration of family planning with other areas of health planning and service delivery; positive commitment by Governments; regular review, assessment and evaluation of progress and identification of unmet needs; and increased coordination and collaboration among agencies and organizations, including donors.

F. Health and mortality

28. Through the Declaration, the Governments had committed themselves to achieve a rapid and substantial reduction in infant mortality and to reduce maternal mortality rates by half by the year 2000 by, inter alia, taking the necessary steps to provide family-planning knowledge and services to all men and women; reducing the incidence of pregnancies among adolescents and older women; providing all pregnant women with comprehensive antenatal and post-natal care; continuing the commitment to immunizations, control of diarrhoeal diseases and

acute respiratory infections; and preventing and treating sexually transmitted diseases.

G. Population distribution, urbanization and internal migration

29. The importance of addressing the causes and identifying the motivation behind urbanization and internal migration was acknowledged by the participants. Governments must focus on its impact on areas of origin and of destination. In addition, Governments needed to address the issues of rural development, equity and food security. The Declaration also stated that additional data on population distribution, migration within the countries and territories and intraregional migration would be an important factor in a clearer understanding of migration trends and the impacts of population redistribution.

H. International migration

30. The Declaration stressed the role played by Pacific Islands migrants in the development of Pacific Rim economies and encouraged Governments to ensure that countries and territories in the Pacific Islands and in the Pacific Rim conduct migration policies to their mutual benefit in a stable and transparent manner. The participants acknowledged the impact of migration into the territories of the region and urged administering Powers to respect the wishes of local populations.

I. Promotion of population information, education and communication

31. The Declaration recognized, inter alia, the need to adopt culturally appropriate methods to improve the knowledge and understanding of men, women, youth and adolescents about population and reproduction; the need to increase the participation of community organizations and non-governmental organizations; to strengthen existing national communication capacities; to undertake research, pre-test and disseminate communication materials; and to use the mass media, as well as informal communications. The Pacific Population Information Network (POPIN), currently established in eight of the Pacific Island countries, should be extended to include others in the region.

J. Capacity-building

32. The Declaration recommended that the integration of population and environmental issues into planning become an integral part of development planning in the region. Therefore, national and regional efforts in training should be supported.

K. Technology, research and development

33. The participants stressed the need to maximize efforts to identify appropriate technology and ensure its development and adaptation. To accomplish that, the Declaration emphasized that comprehensive research on the use of available resources in the region was required.

L. National action

34. The Declaration urged Governments to make firm commitments for the achievement of population and development policies and programmes and recommended that at least 20 per cent of public expenditure be allocated to social sector development programmes. It further recommended the establishment of national and local planning and coordination mechanisms, as well as clear, short- and long-term national goals for population, economic growth and sustainable development.

M. International cooperation

35. The countries of the Pacific Islands encouraged international agencies and donor organizations to continue to cooperate with relevant regional organizations in full conformity with the wishes of the countries and territories of the region in coordinating population assistance within the overall context of sustainable development activities. In addition, the Declaration stressed the need for continued full and close cooperation between regional organizations.

N. Partnerships with non-governmental sector

36. The Declaration encouraged close cooperation between Governments and the non-governmental sector by involving representatives of non-governmental organizations in discussions on population and development priorities and programmes.

III. SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (SAARC) MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND FAMILY HEALTH

37. The Conference, which was held at Kathmandu, from 21 to 23 November 1993, discussed key issues on women and family health. The SAARC region had been characterized by high levels of fertility, accompanied by high levels of infant, child and maternal mortality and morbidity. Unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions, inadequate access to quality family-planning and reproductive health services, and unmet demand for contraceptives and family planning hindered women from making informed and voluntary choices to regulate their fertility. Bringing women into the mainstream of development was a major concern of the SAARC region.

38. The Conference adopted the Kathmandu Resolution on Women and Family Health, reaffirming that each nation may take appropriate action in the field of women and family health in order to raise the well-being of women and their families. The representatives agreed to encourage, through information, education, communication and effective counselling, the adoption of the small family norm as ideal.

39. The Resolution urged that regional cooperation be promoted and that a mechanism be developed for sharing experiences and for facilitating the transfer of technology in the field of women and family health. It called upon member countries to generate the strong political commitment required to empower women and improve their status in society.

40. The Resolution called upon the donor community to provide increased financial assistance to developing countries for their development programmes aimed at accelerating sustained economic growth and achieving sustainable development, and alleviating poverty. It emphasized the importance of the full involvement and participation of non-governmental organizations, voluntary organizations, opinion leaders and the community in raising the status of women in society.

IV. ANDEAN MEETING ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

41. Representatives of the Andean countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela) met in Lima from 1 to 3 December 1993 to discuss common Andean population problems as part of the preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development. The Andean countries had approximately 90.7 million inhabitants and made up a subregion within Latin America united by historical roots and ethnic, cultural, social, economic and religious characteristics, covering a varied area with similar geography and diverse ecosystems. The region had been further characterized by high population growth rates, high fertility rates, high infant, child and maternal mortality and morbidity rates, unequal gender relations, high levels of poverty among almost half the households, a strong urban drift and serious deforestation owing to population factors.

42. The Meeting was mindful of prior international commitments and declarations, such as the 1993 Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development, adopted at the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development held at Mexico City from 29 April to 4 May 1993. The Meeting adopted the Andean Declaration on Population and Development, containing a series of commitments to action in different fields.

43. The Declaration encouraged Governments to integrate population policies and programmes within national sustainable development projects. It urged Governments to increase the accessibility to information, education and family-planning services, as well as the coverage and quality of social security and the delivery of health services and education. It also called for further study of abortion as a public health problem. The Declaration called upon Governments to eliminate all forms of gender bias and to promote women's equal participation in and guarantee their access to development benefits.

44. The Declaration urged the promotion of bi-national and subregional agreements to strengthen development and integration processes and called upon Governments to foster research and the training of human resources, as well as cooperation between the Andean countries through the establishment of advisory bodies and coordination mechanisms.

45. The Declaration urged the promotion of greater coordination between Governments and civil society in designing and implementing population policies. It also called for an increase in funding for international technical and financial cooperation.

V. CARIBBEAN MEETING OF EXPERTS FOR A REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON POPULATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

46. The Caribbean Meeting was convened in Port-of-Spain on 2 and 3 December 1993, to identify key population and development issues of concern to the region. The following countries and territories were represented: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and United States Virgin Islands.

47. The Caribbean region has been characterized by small islands and low-lying coastal States dispersed over vast areas of the Caribbean Sea. Given the small size of the countries and the limited resource base, the possibilities of the population to generate self-sustaining economic growth have been hampered. The consequences of the complex interrelations between population, development, social and cultural factors and the environment had resulted in emigration, deterioration of the environment, unemployment, lack of educational and training opportunities, inadequate health facilities and services, erosion of the family structure, high levels of teenage pregnancy, and the increasing incidence of sexually transmitted diseases.

48. The Meeting acknowledged the Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development, adopted at the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, held in Mexico City from 29 April to 4 May 1993, and the decision to formulate a regional plan of action on population and development. The Meeting agreed on the Port-of-Spain Draft Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development, which reflects their common concerns in regard to population and development. The Declaration was formulated and approved as the subregion's contribution to the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development and to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and its preparations. Following a preamble and a statement of principles, the Declaration addressed, inter alia, the 14 major subjects and areas of concern set out below.

A. Interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development

49. The Declaration stated that population issues must be integrated into the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to economic and social development and the environment. It encouraged Governments to consider the establishment or identification of a ministry or population unit responsible for population and related planning. The establishment of a population council was also considered an appropriate and effective mechanism for playing an advocacy role and for facilitating the establishment of a macroeconomic and demographic planning framework. The Declaration recognized that such efforts depend for their success on continued political commitment.

50. According to the Declaration, alleviating the conditions of abject poverty was an integral part of the agenda for sustainable development. Investments and expenditures to facilitate access to education and training, as well as to economic policies that increase opportunities to participate in the labour force, should be given high priority. Particular attention should be given to the situation of poor women.

51. Governments were called upon to support the implementation of policies that would minimize severe ecological damage and its health and welfare repercussions. Governments should, therefore, consider putting in place the appropriate technology and regulatory mechanisms.

B. Gender equality and the empowerment of women

52. The Declaration stated that population policies and programmes must be gender-sensitive and should involve measures to empower women, eliminate gender bias and ensure that women are fully integrated into the development process. Population issues could not be separated from the issue of improving the social, economic, political and legal status of women. For sustainable development to occur, there must be genuine gender equality and equal access to participation in all development activities by women and girls.

53. Adequate support should be given to non-governmental organizations and women's organizations working towards the empowerment of women. Also, commitment should be given to the strengthening of national machinery and administrative mechanisms in gender-sensitive planning, capabilities for research and the implementation of programmes.

C. The family, its roles, composition and structure

54. In recognition of the large numbers of female-headed households, the Declaration urged the provision of means to facilitate compatibility between economic activity and parental roles. It acknowledged the need for the formulation of family-sensitive policies providing support particularly to vulnerable families and the establishment of guidelines for monitoring and implementing family policies and programmes.

D. Population growth and structure

55. Facing the challenges associated with population growth and structure, the Declaration stressed the particular needs and requirements of such exposed and vulnerable groups as children, youth, the aged and the disabled.

E. Reproductive rights, reproductive health and family planning

56. The Declaration reaffirmed the commitment of Governments to ensure that reproductive health services at primary health care levels for men and women of all ages contained a client-centred, cultural approach. It recommended a review of the legal and regulatory barriers to reproductive health services, the illegality of abortions, maternity leave regulations, the provision of facilities for breast-feeding mothers, and access to reproductive health services.

57. The Declaration further recommended that, in addition to the preventive health programmes being implemented, action be taken to devise strategies and programmes to address the consequences of adolescent fertility and to assist teenage mothers in re-entering the school system as well as employment. It stressed the urgent need for the expansion of reproductive choice by developing new and improved methods of fertility regulation that were safe, effective and responsive to the needs and concerns of the users, including adolescents.

F. Health and mortality

58. The participants committed themselves to achieving a rapid and substantial reduction in infant, child and maternal mortality and morbidity. The Declaration urged the continued promotion of comprehensive mother and child health services at primary health care levels, including the provision of appropriate nutritional supplements and greater advocacy of complete breast-feeding of all infants up to six months. It further urged the promotion of safe and responsible sex and strengthening of programmes on health education about sexually transmitted diseases and the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) for adults as well as adolescents.

G. Population distribution, urbanization and internal migration

59. The Declaration stressed the need to promote strategies that encouraged the growth of small urban centres, as well as the sustainable development of rural areas, mindful of the need to reduce the risks of environmental degradation through strategies appropriate to the fragile ecosystems of small island States and low-lying coastal countries.

H. International migration

60. The Declaration supported the need for the establishment of programmes designed to favour the retention or the return and reinsertion of qualified human resources into the labour market. It also urged close collaboration between receiving and sending countries to formulate strategies to meet the human resource needs of both countries as well as the conduct of more research in the area of international migration.

I. Information, education and communication

61. The Declaration encouraged the adoption of an "integrated marketing communication" approach which would allow for the systematic planned use of techniques ranging from adult education, public advocacy and public relations to counselling, promotion, market and advertising, working from a solid "market" research base with clearly established goals. It also stressed the need for special training programmes to develop a new cadre of information, education and communication (IEC) professionals.

J. Capacity-building

62. The Declaration recommended the strengthening of the capacity of national planners for population formulation, implementation, assessment and monitoring; improvement of demographic data collection, analysis and dissemination of research findings; and encouragement of closer collaboration between the region's research institutions.

K. Technology, research and development

63. Governments were urged to promote research that is essential to the design, implementation and monitoring of population policies and programmes, as well as to foster closer interaction between policy makers, government technical staff, statisticians and researchers. Also, efficient systems had to be set up to improve the coverage of vital events, such as births and deaths, by regional statistical agencies. Further, priority should be given to research on reproductive tract infections (including sexually transmitted diseases) and the quality and coverage of antenatal, post-partum and perinatal care, as well as to research projects on the determinants and dynamics of contraceptive use in the context of stagnating prevalence.

L. National action

64. The Declaration called upon Governments to explore innovative methods of raising awareness among political leaders, planners and policy makers of the interrelationships between population and development and the need to incorporate population issues in social and economic programmes. National action required the formulation of comprehensive population and development policies and the design of integrated plans and programmes of action. The

Declaration encouraged Governments to intensify national efforts to generate domestic resources to support all categories of population and development activities.

M. International cooperation

65. International development agencies, donor organizations and partner countries were encouraged to act in a coordinated manner to guarantee consistency and continuity of support to programmes and to promote the attainment of policies and goals of the countries and territories of the region. The Declaration also stressed the need for continued full and close cooperation between regional organizations where issues of a cross-sectoral and interrelated nature are concerned.

N. Partnerships with non-governmental organizations

66. The Declaration reaffirmed the need to enhance the partnership between Governments, non-governmental organizations, especially women's groups, the private sector and local communities and encouraged non-governmental organizations to participate fully in the conceptualization, innovation, implementation and evaluation of population and development programmes. Governments and international agencies were urged to create suitable mechanisms, frameworks and financial resources to enhance the role of non-governmental organizations in the field of population.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I.

2/ "Report of the Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, Denpasar, Indonesia, 19-27 August 1992" (E/CONF.84/PC/14), annex.

3/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1988, Supplement No. 11 (E/1988/35), chap. IV, resolution 274 (XLIV), annex.

4/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol. I, Vol. I/Corr.1, Vol. II, Vol. III and Vol. III/Corr.1)) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.

5/ A copy of the Port Vila Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development was made available by the Government of the Marshall Islands to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session in document A/C.2/48/3.